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Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama: draft resolution

Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 68/207 of 20 December 2013 and 70/196 of 22 December 2015, and all relevant declarations and conferences on this matter,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations

[1] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

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Framework Convention on Climate Change[2] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Recalling the Sendai Declaration[3] and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,[4] in which Member States recognized the need to promote and integrate disaster risk management approaches throughout the tourism industry, given the often heavy reliance on tourism as a key economic driver,

Recalling also the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization at its twenty-first session, held in Medellin, Colombia, from 12 to 17 September 2015, on the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, 2017, and noting the ongoing efforts and initiatives to celebrate the Year, with a view to creating awareness of the important contribution of tourism to sustainable development while promoting the exchange of good practices, knowledge and experiences, as well as increased cross-border collaboration by developing joint ventures to increase the synergies of tourism, including the sharing of tourism-related data and statistics,

Recognizing the important cross-cutting role of sustainable tourism as a positive contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty, with a focus on ecotourism, community-based tourism and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, the generation of trade opportunities, protection of the environment, improvement of quality of life and empowerment of women, especially in developing countries,

Noting in this regard the role of the Central American Integration System,[5] through the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat, in the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region,

Commending the ongoing efforts of the Governments of the Central American countries, in coordination with the Central American Commission on Environment and Development and in cooperation with the World Tourism Organization, in the implementation of existing and new programmes designed to launch and promote sustainable tourism throughout the region,

Noting the existing joint initiatives designed and implemented to stimulate regional tourism integration and to foster the development of local communities such as the Mayan World regional brand,

Noting also the outcomes of the Forum on Tourism, Sustainability and Climate Change in Central America, held from 11 to 13 April 2013 in La Ceiba, Honduras, the declaration of the 15th forum on the development of tourism and on the harmonization of efforts to promote tourism in Central America and the Dominican Republic, held in Guatemala City on 27 August 2014, and the outcomes adopted at the 96th meeting of the Central American Tourism Council, held in San Salvador on 14 July 2015,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[6]

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[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[3] Resolution 69/283, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex II.

[5] The membership of the Central American Integration System includes Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

[6] A/72/174.

2. *Recognizes* the major role that sustainable tourism plays in the development of the Central American countries, as an instrument of social inclusion that generates decent jobs and contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of the population, aimed at achieving poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions;

3. *Welcomes* the adoption of the principles of sustainable tourism, developed by the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat and found in its strategic plan for sustainable development, 2014-2018, which captures the region's vision as an integrated, sustainable, multi-location, cross-border destination of high quality and emphasizes its action plan for tourism and climate change as a component of the regional strategy on climate change;

4. *Recognizes* the valuable role of international cooperation with relevant partners, and encourages them to continue to support the implementation of various projects aimed at promoting sustainable tourism in the region, by, inter alia strengthening ecotourism, rural, cultural and heritage tourism, including colonial sites, preventing trafficking in cultural artifacts and ensuring respect for intangible cultural heritage;

5. *Welcomes* the progress made by the Central American countries in converging towards a regional tourism strategy based on preserving the region's biodiversity and natural and cultural attractions, reducing poverty through employment and entrepreneurial tourism development that emphasizes micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, while addressing the adverse effects of climate change to improve the quality of life of the region's inhabitants;

6. *Appreciates* the continued efforts of the Central American countries to support sustainable tourism development, including the adoption and implementation of new legislations and policies, and encourages them to use sustainable tourism as a tool to promote the eradication of poverty and enhance the protection of biodiversity, cultural heritage and community development;

7. *Recognizes* the continued need to support sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building efforts that promote environmental awareness, conserve and protect the environment, respect wildlife, flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity and improve the welfare and livelihoods of local communities by supporting their local economies and the human and natural environment as a whole;

8. *Notes* the importance of adequately measuring the sociocultural and environmental impact of tourism, and encourages efforts to fill the present data gap in this area by taking advantage of the emergence of non-traditional solutions and sources of data, with an overarching goal of advancing the national sustainable development agenda beyond the tourism sector;

9. *Recognizes* that the implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns in the tourism sector in Central America, and hence advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region,[7] requires, inter alia, the identification and adoption of more resource-efficient tourism planning approaches by all relevant stakeholders;

10. *Stresses* the need to promote the further development of sustainable tourism, in particular through the consumption of sustainable tourism products and services, and to strengthen the development of ecotourism, maintaining, in particular, the culture and environmental integrity of indigenous and local

[7] Resolution 70/1.

communities and enhancing the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and the natural heritage;

11. *Invites* Governments and other stakeholders to join the Sustainable Tourism Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns,[5] which aims at promoting innovation and circular thinking to accelerate resource efficiency in the tourism value chain;

12. *Recognizes* the actions taken with the aim of establishing the first observatory for sustainable tourism in the region, and invites Governments and other stakeholders to consider joining the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories of the World Tourism Organization, which contributes to the promotion of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable tourism, and to support the practice of informed policymaking around the world;

13. *Urges* the tourism sector in the Central American countries to be part of the coordination, knowledge-sharing and communication mechanisms for security and emergency management at the national and regional levels and to collectively promote an evidence-based approach in developing measures for safe, secure and seamless travel, which will enable government agencies to make relevant, informed and coordinated decisions;

14. *Welcomes* the efforts of the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, regional commissions and other regional organizations, as well as the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to promote sustainable tourism worldwide;

15. *Invites* States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders and the World Tourism Organization to continue to support the activities undertaken by the Central American countries for the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region, including with regard to emergency preparedness for better disaster risk reduction, as well as for capacity-building, job creation and the promotion of local culture and products, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

16. *Encourages* the Central American countries, through the Central American Tourism Council and the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat, to continue to support sustainable tourism through policies that foster responsive and inclusive tourism, strengthen regional identity and protect their natural and cultural heritage, including their ecosystems and biodiversity, and notes that existing initiatives, such as the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, among other international initiatives, can deliver direct and focused support to Governments;

17. *Recognizes* that people with disabilities have equal rights to access tourism services and opportunities, such as independent travel, accessible services, trained staff, reliable information and inclusive marketing, and that great efforts should be made to ensure that tourism policies and practices are inclusive of persons with disabilities, the majority of whom live in developing countries;

18. *Calls upon* Member States and the tourism sector to take effective measures, in the context of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism initiatives, to help to ensure the equal participation of women and the balanced participation of youth, persons with disabilities and older persons at all levels and in decision-making processes in all areas and to promote effective economic empowerment, mainly through decent job and income creation;

[5] A/CONF.216/5, annex.

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, with a set of recommendations to promote and enhance sustainable tourism and sustainable development in its three dimensions in the Central America countries, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fourth session the item entitled "Sustainable development".